

THE REHEARSAL.

Another Comical Romance betwixt a Flagg-Officer and a Baker. Which is made a Party-Cause too.

SATURDAY, February 22. 1706.

Country-man. I must Interrupt your Discourse, Master, with a Letter I have here for you from Portsmouth. The matter is about Sir Thomas Dilks his Caning an Impertinent Baker there who had (as he thought) Affronted him. The *Observer* having got this by the End, made a Great Fuzz with it in his 8th last Month, Vol. 5. N. 85. And gave us a Post-Script to that *Observer* in a Distinct Half Sheet (he was so Full of it) which Contains a Long Letter to him from the Baker that was Beaten Henry Seager the *Observer* writes him, but my Letter calls him Seager. But I suppose we need not spend time about spelling the Name of the Family.

Rehearsal. I have Read his Letter in the Post-script to *Observer*. And he makes it a Party-Cause, and puts it upon High-Church, which he calls the High-Flying-Faction. The Rancounter it self is Worth no bodys Notice. But it is Worth Notice, to see the Industry of a Set of Men Bent against the Church, That no Private Quarrel can happen, nor a Gentleman Correct any Mean Fellow for his Insolence, but it is made a Plot presently of High-Church, and must be Harang'd upon through the Nation! But since they have Begun it, let us hear what your Letter says, it is Just to hear both Parties.

Country-m. The Letter I suppose is meant to your self, and is as follows,

"SIR,
"YOU have undoubtedly long before this time met with a Letter written by Mr. Henry Seager, and Printed in the *Observer* as a Just and Faithfull Account only of Matter of Fact, and a Modest Vindication of that Worshipfull Justices proceedings against Sir Thomas Dilks. When it came first into these Parts, we were in hopes it wou'd have undergon the deserved Fate of Mr. Tutchin's Empty abusive Libels, of being Laught at and laid aside, or apply'd to their Proper Uses. But finding that either Ignorance or Prejudice hath Inclind too many to believe those ill-Natur'd Falsities, and upon such a Worthy Authority to Reflect not only upon that Worthy Flagg, but likewise the Mayor and Better part of the Corporation of Portsmouth, I think my self Oblig'd to do so much Justice to Both as to put this Matter in a fair Light, that you may Judge how much the World is Impos'd upon by Men of Scandalous Principles and Designs, and upon what slender

Grounds the *Observer* takes the Uncon-
troul'd Liberty of Abusing his Superiors,
and Exposing them to Scandal and Ob-
loquy for Imaginary failures proceeding
purely from his own or his Informers
Invention.

"In the first Paragraph of his Letter Mr. Seager very Unjustly Accuseth his Brethren of Negligence and Remissness in their Offices as Justices of Peace, and Pharisaically vaunts himself the only Righteous Conscientious Man in the Discharge of his Duty; having made every one (as he tells Us) without Respect of Persons, pay according to Law for Swearing in his Presence. Whereas he knows and hath not yet Front enough to Deny it, That while in that Office, he hath Occasionally several times Heard and Permitted Swearing in the Publick Houses of John Dymar, Josias Clark, &c. in Portsmouth, without Insisting upon the Penalty annex'd to that Offence.

"He Complains of the High-Flying Factionous Party, for sending for the out-Burgeses to Vote (as he Supposeth) against him; but without the least Colour of Reason, since from the first Establishment of that Corporation it hath always been Customary to Summon all Burgeses living in Adjacent places by an Officer appointed for that Purpose, in order to Choose a Mayor and Justices. Of this Number were Sir Brockast Gardiner, Captain Player, Alderman Thomas, Captain Pointz, and several others who Attended at the last Election, most of them Gentlemen of Sense as well as Honesty, and therefore very Unlikely to Return Mr. Seager Thanks for the Invidious Enflaming Character of High-Flying and Factionous, by which he hath been Pleas'd to Distinguish them.

"Whether any or all the out-Burgeses voted for or against this Low-flying Alderman, is not material to Enquire: Certain it is, That he was Thrown out by a Majority of Twenty Voices: And that two of the Justices then Elect (viz. Mr. Vining, and Mr. Deacon, Gentlemen of Unquestionable Honour and Fidelity to the present Establishment) wou'd suffer Injury by being Compar'd with him. As for Mr. Blakely, the other Person who was Chosen at the same time, 'tis plain that if he Deserves the Name of an High-flyer, &c. Mr. Seager cannot fairly Elude the same Character, it being notoriously known, that their Votes and Interest

terest have always united in the Choice
of Members of Parliament, as well for the
County as the Corporation, and more particu-
larly for those Worthy Gentlemen who
at present Represent both.

“ Since Mr. Seager is so free in fixing
what Principles he thinks fit upon others,
he will not sure be Angry if we Enquire a
little into his own, and tell the World
what (to his Eternal Disgrace) is too True
to be Deny’d, That tho’ he Professeth
himself a Member of the Church of En-
gland, as Establish’d by Law, and accord-
ly sometimes Communicats at his Parish
Church in the Morning, he yet Publickly
maintains it to be Lawful to Repair to a
Conventicle in the Afternoon, and there to
Receive the Sacrament with his Dearly Be-
loved of the Presbyterian Perswasion;
Who, on the Account of his Signal Mode-
ration, no less than his Eminent Learning
and Merit, have thought fit to make him
one of the Venerable Order of their
Elders!

“ Left this shou’d seem too Monstrous to
be Believ’d, be pleas’d, Sir, to take this one
Instance of matter of Fact, among several
others that might be given for the Con-
firmation of it. In the first Year of his
Mayoralty Mr. Seager Repair’d to his Parish
Church in the Morning, and in the After-
noon to a Separat Meeting; Not in a Clan-
destine Manner, but (as if he wou’d Glory
in his Shame) with a Theatrical Impu-
dence, Array’d with all the Formalities of
his Office, and with the Mace Triumphant-
ly Carry’d before him to the Door;
whence he was forc’d (the Honest Sergeant
refusing to Enter those Tents of Iniquity)
to Carry it into the Body of the Conventicle
himself, as an Argument of his great Zeal
for the Establish’d Church, and a palpable
Demonstration that he was more Studiously
concern’d for the Good of That, and of
his Country, than his High-Flying Faction-
Brethren! Who Remonstrated against
these his Scandalous Proceedings; And
(had it been in their Power) wou’d have
brought him to Condigne Punishment too,
for making so Perverse an use of that Au-
thority with which they had Entrusted
him, in hopes of a very different Behaviour,
and much better things from him.

“ But to return to his Behaviour towards
Sir Thomas Dilks, he says, Sir Thomas Swore
five Oaths at the Mayor’s Table, and more
too, on Purpose (says he) to Provoke me to
take Notice of it. If Sir Thomas did Swear,
it was a Great Fault in him, and none will
be an Advocat for him upon that Account.
“ But why he shou’d do it, on Purpose to Pro-
voke Mr. Seager more than the Mayor and
others Present as Considerable as Mr.
Seager is hard to Imagine. But Mr. Seager
takes it to himself, upon no other Ground
that I can see, but as supposing himself to
be the Gravest and most Holy Man in the
Company. And he must have had better
Ears too, for of all the 16 Persons who
Din’d at the same Table, not one but Mr.
Seager Remembers that Sir Thomas Swore
any Oath at all.

“ However immediatly after Dinner, Mr.
Seager withdrew from the Company, and
without giving Sir Thomas the least Inti-
mation of his Design, or Demanding from
him the Money due by Law for his sup-
pos’d Oaths, he Issu’d out his Warrant a-
gainst him, and gave it to the Town Con-
stable, with a Charge that he shou’d serve
it. The Constable not willing to be guilty
of such Rudeness towards a Flagg, as to
lay him by the Heels, without being As-
sur’d that he proceeded upon Good and
Justifiable Grounds, desir’d Advice of one
of Mr. Seager’s own Brethren, who having
perus’d the Warrant, and thinking it to
be (as it really was) void, advis’d him not
to serve it, unless Mr. Seager had Enjoin’d
him to Execute Justice (as ’twas usual for
him to say that he wou’d) Right or Wrong.
“ For this and several other Affronts, Sir
Thomas meeting Mr. Seager some time after
he was turn’d out of his Office of Justice of
Peace, did Cane him. And Mr. Seager has
Bound him over to the Sessions, and intends
to bring his Action at Law against him for it.
“ But Mr. Seager was not always this Peacea-
ble Man, or he knows how to meddle
with his Match, for he Assaulted and Beat
his Brother Blakely, who was at that time
a Justice of Peace, only for speaking the
Truth. He had not then it seems so great
a Regard to the Laws, as he has Learn’d
since.

“ But since he has Appeal’d to the Law,
what need had he to Write (as he tells in
his Printed Letter he has) to his Royal
Highness the Prince, and to the Secretary of
State? And wonders he has not had an
Answer from either of them. Which
may seem strange! Considering the Famili-
arity with which he Address’d himself to
his Royal Highness when he was last at
Portsmouth, in these words, Sir give my
Duty to your Bed-Fellow, and tell her I am her
Dutiful Subject. With which having Es-
cap’d without Reproof, he now goes on,
and enters into a Personal Correspondence
with his Royal Highness, and takes it ill the
Prince do’s not Answer his Letters!

“ I fear, Sir I have trespass’d upon your
Patience by so long a Letter, but it was
what the Subject seem’d to Require, and
therefore I hope you will more easily Excuse
me. I faithfully Assure you, that I have not
offer’d the least Injury to Mr. Seager, or
the Truth, in the Account here given; it
is matter of Fact, without any Ill-Design’d
Gloss or Insinuation. And if either your
self or the World (if you think fit to Pub-
lish it) shall Require any further Satisfaction
in any Particular, I shall always be Ready,
upon the least Notice, to give it. And am,
Sir,
Your very Humble
Servant.

Portsmouth Feb.
13: 1706.

This is the Letter. Upon which I have not
time to make any Remarks to Night.